

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Health
Hearing on “21st Century Cures: Examining Ways to Combat Antibiotic Resistance and
Foster New Drug Development”
September 19, 2014

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today’s hearing is an important opportunity to review the growing threat of antibiotic resistant infection – a global health crisis. To quote the CDC: “The loss of effective antibiotic treatments will not only cripple the ability to fight routine infectious diseases but will also undermine treatment of infectious complications in patients with other diseases.” This public health crisis is an important topic for us to explore as we continue our work on the bipartisan 21st Century Cures initiative and work to bring more effective treatments to patients more quickly.

Make no mistake: we are losing effective antibiotic treatments because the pace of new and novel drug development has not kept up with these organisms’ ability to build resistance to the treatments available today.

Passage of the GAIN Act in the 112th Congress as part of our efforts to reauthorize the FDA User Fee legislation was an important step in incentivizing antibiotic drug development, but much work remains to be done.

Committee members Congressmen Gingrey and Green have put forward one such idea – the Adapt Act – and I want to commend them for their continued leadership in addressing these important issues.

The President’s own Council on Science and Technology (or PCAST) just yesterday released a call to action on the issue of antibiotic resistance. This plan included a number of initiatives it intends to undertake over the next 5 years, including incentives for the development new drugs and diagnostic tests. We will continue to engage on this issue as part of our bipartisan 21st Century Cures agenda.

Today’s witnesses will provide important perspectives on the types of incentives to help drive the types of new drug development necessary to meet this growing threat and whether such incentives might also address other areas of unmet need.

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